

The European Federation of Campingsite Organisations and Holiday Park Associations (EFCO&HPA)

Positive strategies for managing motor home tourism

A policy statement by the European Federation of Campingsite Organisations and Holiday Park Associations (EFCO&HPA)

Tourism in motor homes (camper vans) is becoming ever more popular across Europe. It offers increasing numbers of tourists new freedom in travelling and discovering the continent's many world-beating tourist attractions and destinations. This is good news for Europe's tourist economy, sustaining jobs and businesses -often in rural and coastal areas which rely on tourist revenue.

Yet the development of this important market is not being managed as well as it should be by public authorities. Poor destination management and a lack of facilities for motor homes can lead to problems for traffic, parking and the environment in tourist areas. These can, in turn, undermine attempts to promote sustainable tourism development and impose additional and unnecessary costs on the authorities.

The potential benefits of motor home tourism for the European tourism economy are considerable, but demand needs to be managed effectively. EFCO&HPA calls on all public authorities to devise positive strategies which will allow them to maximise the benefits of motor home tourism for their areas and for Europe as a whole.

Holiday parks rising to the challenge

Many EFCO&HPA members are developing 'quick-stop' pitches for overnight stops by motor home users. Most of these pitches are situated in front of existing holiday parks.

Quick stops are cheaper than conventional longer-stay pitches and offer motor home users the greater freedom and flexibility in their arrival and departure times that they expect. Users' safety is assured - and enhanced further by the opportunity to register visitors' stays. The local environment benefits from improved management of waste and waste water. Revenue is generated for the local economy.

EFCO&HPA's policy is to encourage further development of quick stops wherever space and local planning policies permit.

Uncontrolled overnight parking benefits no one

Random and uncontrolled parking by motor homes is in no one's interest. It is not in the interest of –

- * *motor home users* for whom such improvised facilities are poor, unwelcoming and potentially insecure and unsafe, even if they are free of charge - such as parking in areas where there is a potential flood risk;
- * *residents and other visitors* because of its detrimental visual impact, and especially in areas of scenic beauty;
- * *holiday parks*, whose viability it can jeopardise;
- * *the destinations*. Little or no contribution is made to the local tourist economy, while the local authorities have themselves to meet the costs incurred in clearing up any problems and environmental concerns caused by the unplanned nature of the facilities.

What the public authorities can do

- * Devise comprehensive traffic management and parking policies to make clear which parking places are available to motor homes - and at which times they are available. It may be, for example, that vehicles are permitted to stop for short periods on the street or in car parks, but be required to move to alternative facilities, such as holiday parks, for overnight stops.
- * Enforce these traffic management and parking policies effectively.
- * Provide signposting to authorised areas for overnight stays, such as holiday parks.
- * Ensure that better information is provided on destination websites and at tourist information centres.
- * Encourage the provision of privately run overnight facilities for motor homes where none exists already.
- * Control the development of aires. These roadside resting places for motorhome users on long journeys are proliferating in some countries. They are not subject to the same legal requirements as holiday parks, whose customers they often receive. All aires should be constructed to the same minimum standards with respect to the needs of the environment, visual amenity and public health as those provided on holiday parks.

Further help and advice

The national holiday-park associations in EFCO&HPA membership will be delighted to help. For more details on who these are, please visit <http://www.campingeurope.com/>.

January 2018

The European Federation of Campingsite Organisations and Holiday Park Associations (EFCO&HPA)

EFCO&HPA is a grouping of national trade associations in the camping and caravanning sector. We have members in 23 European countries, including 20 EU member states and 3 non-EU countries. All are associations of holiday-park operators and together we represent an industry of over 20,000 holiday parks across Europe.

Holiday parks are more than just caravan and campsites. They offer:

- * *Pitches for touring caravans, motor homes (camper vans) and tents:* facilities for visiting tourists bringing their accommodation with them.
- * *Self-catering accommodation for short-term holiday lets:* caravan holiday homes, chalets, lodges, bungalows and tents which are owned by, and can be rented from, the park operator.
- * *Pitches for privately owned caravan holiday homes, chalets and bungalows:* rented out by the parks to customers who put their own holiday homes on them.

They also offer a wide range of other facilities, including swimming pools, sports, bars, restaurants, shops and spas.